



United States Air Force

Retiree Activities Newsletter

Tyndall AFB, Florida

September 2003

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DFAS improves electronic pay services

As more members of the military retiree community and Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuitants become more computer oriented, Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) officials are increasing emphasis on its "myPay" system.

MyPay is a way of allowing customers to manage their pay account information more easily and securely than ever before. A secure Web site and a Personal Identification Number (PIN) make myPay secure, and the system has been designed

to be customer friendly.

Officials point out that retired members and SBP annuitants will find that myPay is accessible via the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It can deliver the Retiree Account Statement (RAS) or Annuitant Account Statement much faster than print mail.

Changes made on myPay are effective the current pay period, and customers have the confidence of knowing their pay information is accurate because they're in charge.

Access to myPay is available at <https://myPay.dfas.mil>.

Some of the features of myPay include the ability to view and print the Retiree or Annuitant Account Statement, view and print tax statements, update bank account and electronic fund transfer information, and edit personal address information.

In addition, retirees can change both federal and state tax withholdings while annuitants can change federal withholdings; and retirees

can manage financial allotments and U.S. savings bonds.

To use myPay, retirees and annuitants must establish a PIN. DFAS customers without a PIN may obtain one by accessing myPay and clicking on "New Pin" or by calling (877) 363-3677 and following the prompts.

A new random temporary PIN for your account will be mailed to your address of record. You should allow 10 business days for delivery.

SOURCE: AFRetiree News Release #3-17-03.

DEERS verification changes for former spouses

The Social Security Number (SSN) used to verify TRICARE eligibility in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) for former spouses who have not remarried is changing.

Starting Oct. 1, 2003, DEERS will reflect TRICARE eligibility for the affected beneficiaries using the former spouse's own SSN rather than the former sponsor's.

Health-care information will be filed under the former spouse's own SSN and name. These beneficiaries will now use their own name and SSN to schedule medical appointments and to file TRICARE claims.

The current Uniformed Services

Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 1173, held by the unremarried former spouse is still valid until it expires.

Upon renewal, the former spouse will be issued a replacement Department of Defense/Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card, DD Form 2765.

The Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office is sending a letter to all beneficiaries affected by this change.

The letter explains the new DEERS eligibility verification procedures and serves as official notification from the DOD regarding this change.

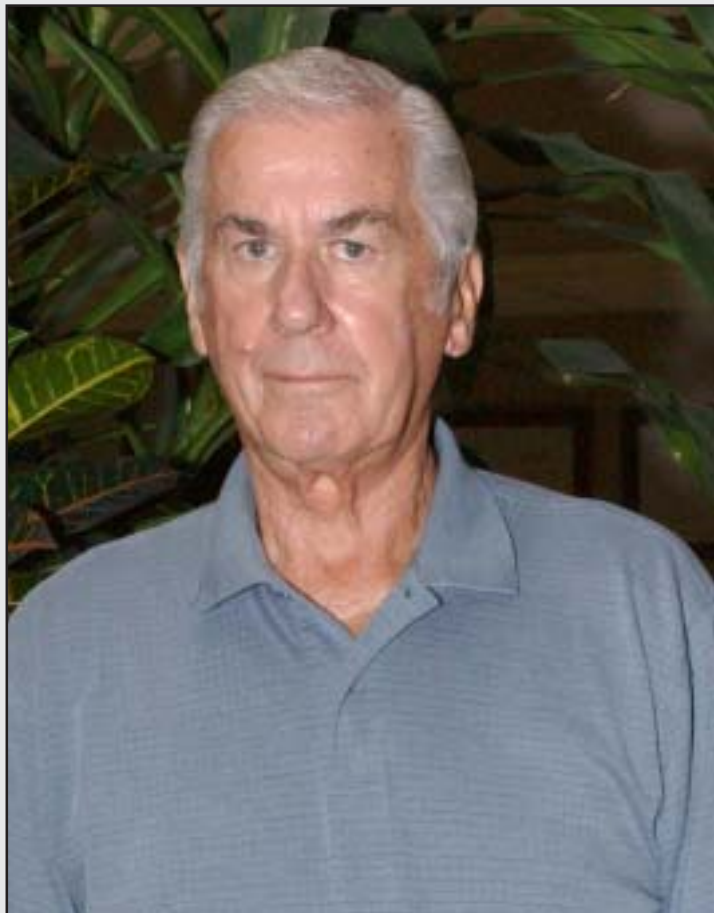
The letter does not, however, pro-

vide proof of continued eligibility for TRICARE health-care benefits. After Oct. 1, 2003, unremarried former spouses may contact or visit the nearest identification card issuing facility. Locations may be found online at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl for questions or assistance.

Former spouses who have not remarried should always keep their DEERS information current and up-to-date. For questions regarding their medical records, they should contact the military treatment facility and medical records department where their DoD medical records are stored.

SOURCE: TRICARE news Release 03-16 dtd 19 Aug 03.

Director's Corner



RETIRED LT. COL. EDWARD BULTMANN

Retiree Activities director

The Tyndall Retiree Activities Office (RAO) is located in Building 662, Suite 245, 445 Suwannee Road, Tyndall Air Force Base, FL. The office phone is (850) 283-2737. A satellite office SRAO is located in the National Guard Armory, 1225 Easterwood Drive, Tallahassee, FL. The SRAO phone number is (850) 574-9094. Both sites have office hours from 9 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. weekdays and have a variety of publications of interest to retirees. Retirees of all military services are welcome to use the facilities and resources of the Tyndall RAO. The Tyndall RAO also maintains a retiree Web page on the Tyndall Internet site (www.tyndall.af.mil/325FW/RAO.htm), and publishes a newsletter twice a year.

The RAO and SRAO mission is to serve all military retirees in our area. If you need assistance, please call one of our offices. If we cannot provide the information you need, we can usually refer you a more knowledgeable source that can. If there are topics you would like to see covered in a future newsletter, let us know.

*The Tyndall Retiree Activities Office Newsletter is published as an insert to the **Gulf Defender**. Articles appearing in this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Department of the Air Force or Tyndall. While editorial effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information herein, no absolute guarantee of accuracy can be given or assumed. Editor: Retired Lt. Col. Edward Bultmann, RAO director, 283-2737. Design and layout: Staff Sgt. Roel Utley, editor, **Gulf Defender**, 283-2983.*

Tyndall retiree appreciation days show gratitude for contributions

Retiree Appreciation Days will be held at Tyndall Air Force Base on Sept. 19-20.

The event is being held a month earlier than in the past. The reason for the move is to have it coincide with the promotions scheduled by the base exchange and commissary.

The commissary is offering case lot sales on a wide variety of food and household items. The commissary sale will take place on both days from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Savings on case lot

items will range from 25 to 50 percent off the regular price, depending on the item.

On Friday, Sept. 19, there will be free cake and coffee in the bakery from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

There will also be free hot dogs, soft drinks and ice cream from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Drawings will be held for assorted giveaways in the produce, meat and grocery departments in addition to \$25 commissary

gift certificates.

Patrons will not have to be present to win.

On Friday and Saturday, the base exchange will hold drawings for \$100 gift baskets and shopping sprees.

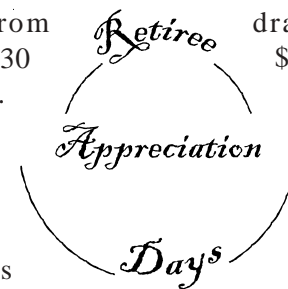
Additionally, there will be special sales on major appliances and demonstrations by factory representatives.

The service station and Shoal Point, Felix Lake and Class Six Shoppettes will hold

drawings for free gas and other giveaways.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, an information fair along with a guest speaker will be held at the officer's club. Mr. Wally Warren, Administrator of Panama City's new Veteran's Affairs nursing home will talk about the new facility and answer questions.

Representatives will be available in customer service, located in the base support center, Building 662, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for issuance of new ID cards and vehicle registration.



Club membership offers retiree benefits

Retirees are eligible to receive all the benefits that regular club members enjoy when they sign up for Air Force Club Membership at the Tyndall Officer's Club.

These benefits include discounts on meals and monthly coupons that offer free or reduced price goods and services from other services squadron facilities.

Once a month the club also has a retiree night when all retirees get 25 percent off the price of their dinners.

The officer's club is an all ranks dining facility and all members will receive a membership card that is honored at any Air Force Base club worldwide.

The "Travel The World On Us" club membership drive is

another reason for retirees to sign up for club membership.

Running through Oct. 31, this contest will award 140 new and current club members with travel-related prizes valued between \$500 and \$5,000.

The Tyndall club has a new chef, and everyone is invited to come out and try the food. For more information, call 283-4357.

National Personnel Records Center announces new online records request procedures

The National Personnel Records Center is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for

documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online Web site.

The new Web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records center's mailroom processing time. Also, because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process

the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized.

Veterans and next of kin may access this application at <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>. Please note there is no requirement to type "www" in front of the Web address.

SOURCE: AFRetire Release No. 06-01-03.

New medical group commander talks goals, challenges

Each year, the 325th Medical Group administers care to more than 15,000 people including military members, their families, and of course, those who have retired from military service.

Serving the medical needs of more than 8,000 retirees in our area is crucial. To that end, how the medical group goes about ensuring the needs of all medical recipients are met is a constant challenge, but one Col. Sean Murphy, the group's new commander, is prepared to meet.

Colonel Murphy, a career pediatrician, who recently completed National War College and served in the Air Force Surgeon General's office as the Air Force's pediatric consultant and as the director of Clinical Optimization and Integration, joined Team Tyndall as the 325th Fighter Wing's new medi-

cal group commander in August. Upon assuming command of the group, Colonel Murphy outlined his vision and goals for providing superior health care to the military and retiree communities.

"The 325th Medical Group vision is air dominance through health-care excellence," the colonel said. "What does that mean? I see a medical group that is not only fully integrated into the wing's vision and mission, but an example for others in all ways. Additionally, I see one team and one mission attitude instilled in all the medics and the internal feeling of family as we take care of our extended family, our beneficiaries. I see the beneficiaries feeling part of that family and understanding their relationship with their personal primary care team that consists

of not only the provider but also the nurses and technicians."

One of the ways in which the colonel sees the group moving closer to that vision is through the incorporation of medical training and prevention-based medicine.

"Each member of these health-care teams has the expertise to give customer care. We need to cash in on each member providing the care they were taught to give," Colonel Murphy said. "[We also need] health care that is prevention based - one in which disease is prevented as opposed to just being diagnosed and treated."

In order to achieve "air dominance through health-care excellence," Colonel Murphy outlined several goals that will play a huge role in the group's success.

"There have been well-established goals in place within the medical group," Colonel Murphy said. "They are to en-



Courtesy photo

Colonel Sean L. Murphy, the new 325th Medical Group Commander, recently highlighted his vision and commitment for improved medical care for all beneficiaries.

sure Team Tyndall is always 'Fit to Fight' and able to support world-wide mission requirements. Additionally, we want to ensure the delivery of outstanding care to those members within our community who entrust us with their health and

well-being. We'll do this by sustaining a health-care delivery system that integrates quality, access and cost, promotes a safe and healthful environment and provides a responsive and sensitive climate for patients, family members and staff."

While medical care for both communities has steadily increased, the 325th Medical Group is poised to not only continue the tradition of excellence in medicine, but also serve as a model for other bases and communities.

"Working with many civilian health-care organizations was an eye-opening experience and helped me understand how far ahead we are compared to civilian health care, especially in the areas of preventive health care," Colonel Murphy said. "Our vision and goals are continually monitored to be sure we are doing what we say we will do."

(Compiled by 325th Fighter Wing public affairs)

Doyle Wade

Retiree Spotlight

Office: Retiree Activities Office

Years in Panama City area:

26 years.

Years in the military: 20

years active duty and 26 years civil service.

Hometown: Gainesville, Texas.

Favorite Assignment: Traffic Management Office at Tyndall Air Force Base.

Greatest aspect of your job:

Staying in contact with Tyndall AFB and its people.

Why do you volunteer: To keep active.

Favorite book: Undaunted Courage by Stephen Ambrose.

Hobbies and activities: Volunteering and yard work, American Association for Retired Persons and helping people with their taxes.



Airman Sarah McDowell

Doyle Wade is a volunteer in the Retiree Activities Office where he assists fellow retirees with various issues.

Government makes grave marker requests easier

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has revised its application form to make requesting a VA grave marker easier.

The new form, Application For Standard Government Headstone or Marker (VA Form 40-1330), includes updated information about changes that expand eligibility for a government marker.

According to VA officials, the new form and instruction sheets also permit better communication between VA and veterans' families.

For deaths on or after Sept. 11, 2001, Public Laws 107-103 and 107-330 made government markers available for use on veterans' graves that were already marked with privately furnished headstones or markers. Previous law pre-

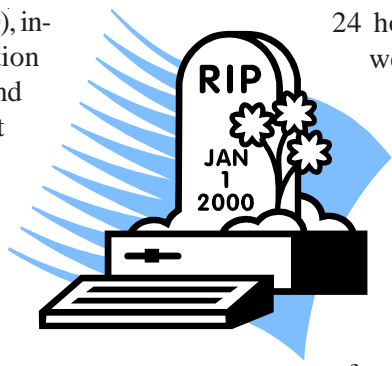
vented the VA from furnishing markers when a grave was already marked.

In January 2002, the VA introduced a toll-free fax service for submitting applications. This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Instructions, as well as the fax number, 1-800-455-7143, are on the VA website at www.cem.va.gov.

The application form on the website can be filled in and printed for submitting by mail or fax. Questions about a head-

stone or marker application can be directed to VA's Memorial Programs Service Applicant Assistance Unit at (800) 697-6947.

SOURCE: AFRetire Release No. 6-02-03



Keep up on the latest retiree information. Read the Gulf Defender weekly!

New changes to Survivor Benefit Plan announced

If you're a Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuitant, you're going to get two things in your mail-box each year. One is a tax statement and the other a Certificate of Eligibility (COE).

Both are important documents. One is used to determine how much tax is owed and the other, the COE, determines if you're going to continue receiving an SBP check each month.

The COE is automatically generated and sent to annuitants approximately 90 days prior to their birthday each year. It's important that it be completed by the annuitant and returned via mail or fax before the annuitant's birthday to avoid any interruption in pay. If a legal representative, such as a power of attorney has been added to an annuitant's account, that individual should complete and sign the form, marking the legal

representative portion as requested.

Officials explain that upon return of the COE, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service processes the document according to the information provided and will either continue, adjust or terminate the annuitant's pay as appropriate.

A marriage certificate is required when the "I married in the past year. . ." box is marked to update the annuitant's account properly. An annuitant should include his or her name and social security number, the name and social security number of his or her deceased sponsor and the signature date.

Forms can be mailed to DFAS, US Military Annuitant Pay, P.O. Box 7131, London, KY 40742-7131 or can be faxed to (800) 982-8459.

SOURCE: AFRetire News Release dated Aug. 12, 2003.

Online TRICARE benefits, services fact sheets available online to answer questions

For those who have personal computers and access to the Internet, fact sheets about TRICARE benefits, services, etc., are available at www.tricare.osd.mil/factsheets (click on Browse A-Z).

The TRICARE Fact Sheets are designed for use by anyone who needs detailed information on particular TRICARE topics.

Beneficiaries, beneficiary counselors and assistance coordinators, customer service representatives and others responsible for explaining or under-

standing TRICARE are encouraged to print out and save all the fact sheets to assist with questions or issues at hand, or to use for future reference.

All of the fact sheets reflect the most current information. Print versions are available at the bottom of each fact sheet.

TRICARE Fact Sheets covering Appeals, Chiropractic Care Program, Defense Enroll-

ment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), Eligibility, FEHBP Demonstration Project, How TRICARE Changes When a Military Sponsor Retires or Dies, Next Generation of TRICARE Contracts, Pharmacy Program, Portability, Regional Managed Care Support Contractors, TRICARE Dental



Program, TRICARE For Life, Transitional Health Care Benefits and many other topics are available at www.tricare.osd.mil/factsheets/index.cfm?fx=show.

For any questions or concerns about any of the above listed TRICARE Fact Sheets, please contact the Office of Communications, Communications and Customer Service, TRICARE Management Activity at media@tma.osd.mil or call the

DOD Worldwide TRICARE Information Center (Toll-Free) 1-888-363-5433 or 1-877-363-6337. Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, 0800 to 2000 (EST) (excluding federal holidays).

Want to get TRICARE answers, assistance via E-mail? Send your request to mailto:TRICARE_Help@AMEDD.ARMY.MIL or mailto:QUESTIONS@tma.osd.mil (SOURCE: TRICARE web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/factsheets)

Retiree news e-mail service

This service is to inform members of the Air Force retiree community, including family members, about legislation, policies and other matters affecting their rights, benefits and obligations.

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exactly as shown.

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That's all there is to it. Hit send.

You will get a return message indicating that you have been subscribed as a non-digest member.

Telephone Numbers and Websites of Interest

TRICARE: Gulf South(4) and Southeast(#) Regions 1-800-444-5445, www.tricare.osd.mil

TRICARE for Life: 1-888-363-5433 www.tricare.osd.mil/tfl

Tricare mail order pharmacy: 1-866-363-2273, www.tricare.osd.mil/tmop

Express Scripts: 1-866-363-8667, www.express-scripts.com

DEERS Eligibility: 1-800-538-9552, www.tricare.osd.mil/deers

Retiree Dental Plan: 1-888-838-8737, www.ddpdelta.org

Long Term Care Insurance: 1-800-582-3337, www.ltcfeds.com